



# Jacksonville Port Authority (JAXPORT) 2025 TRAILBLAZER AWARD WINNER

## ELEVATOR PITCH

In October 2024, JAXPORT's return to Breakbulk Americas with an exhibit after a five-year hiatus demonstrated strategic trade show execution and exceeded our expectations in terms of impact. With two staff members managing the exhibit during 15 hours over three days, we generated 280 high-quality contacts — which was 233% more than our pre-show target of 120 contacts.

The numbers tell a compelling story: our targeted approach yielded an interaction cost of just \$61 per contact, dramatically undercutting the \$596 benchmark cost of comparable field sales calls. This efficiency translated to a soft dollar ROI of 880%, representing nearly \$150,000 in interaction savings.

More impressive was the hard dollar ROI. From those connections emerged cargo opportunities: a pulp customer based upon the port's history of proven service, a new opportunity in construction lumber shipments, and a lead on potential storage of about 2,000 vehicles. These leads represented more than \$750,000 in potential revenue, translating to a projected hard dollar ROI of 4,302%.

Our integrated approach - combining strategic pre-show content, marketing collateral and cost-efficient exhibit design - yielded over 11,450 digital impressions across platforms. Despite navigating the sensitive messaging landscape surrounding the ILA port strike and Southeast U.S. hurricane impacts, our content generated 279 engagements and 331 clicks.

What makes this success particularly remarkable was achieving it during a period of staffing constraints, against the backdrop of industry uncertainty, with a lean team making every minute and dollar count. It's said that 80 percent of success is showing up. JAXPORT did much more than that at Breakbulk Americas 2024, strategically leveraging every resource to maximize impact, resulting in quantifiable relationship-building that delivered return on investment.



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## MEASURABLE RESULTS AND OBJECTIVES ACHIEVEMENT

JAXPORT's presence at Breakbulk Americas supported two main objectives: building brand awareness of our cargo services, and, generating leads to grow volumes of breakbulk cargo - a strategic priority for the port.

We used a multi-channel approach to achieve our brand awareness objectives. Our pre- and post-show content campaign generated 11,457 impressions across platforms, with engagement metrics showcasing quality interactions: 279 likes/reactions, 4 comments/retweets, and 331 clicks.

Blog content addressed specialized topics including "Training the next generation of breakbulk logistics professionals," and, "The art and science of handling breakbulk". We chose this content to position JAXPORT as an authority in the space while aligning with conference programming.

We secured 280 new contacts at the conference, more than double our anticipated metric. Our team's engaging and informative interactions generated substantial opportunities, yielding a conversion rate far beyond our port's achievements at a comparable retailer-focused trade show.

The number of new contacts is impressive, but more so was the quality of pipeline generated by the interactions at the show.

We secured three significant business opportunities representing over \$750,000 in potential revenue. The diversity of these opportunities (breakbulk cargoes pulp and lumber, and, vehicles) reflected our success in showcasing JAXPORT's diversified cargo base to decision-makers.

Lastly, we achieved these results while navigating complex messaging challenges surrounding the labor strike and recent hurricanes, and with only two staff members managing the exhibit. The 233% utilization of our anticipated interaction capacity demonstrates how effectively we maximized our limited human resources.



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## BLAZING A TRAIL

JAXPORT's approach to Breakbulk Americas 2024 blazed new trails through a combination of financial innovation, adaptive strategy and resourceful execution that optimized every aspect of our trade show presence.

Our most significant innovation came by challenging conventional exhibition economics. By purchasing and shipping our own booth furniture rather than renting from the expo center, we dramatically reduced overhead costs. This simple shift represented a fundamental rethinking of trade show budgeting, creating a repeatable model that delivered immediate financial returns while maintaining a professional, engaging booth environment.

The team also adapted when audience preferences defied expectations. Despite our experience at other logistics industry shows suggesting digital preferences, our team quickly pivoted when Breakbulk attendees showed strong interest in our printed materials. When we had distributed all of our 15 printed port directories and nearly all of our 50 fact sheets, we maintained digital access to the collateral through QR codes.

But perhaps most innovative was our efficiency-focused staffing model. While we had originally projected three staff members to represent JAXPORT at this 6,000-attendee show, only two could attend. Our lean two-person team achieved extraordinary results - 280 quality interactions over 30 total staff hours



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Our content strategy innovation also merits recognition. We created specialized content addressing the professional development needs of breakbulk logistics professionals and technical insights on cargo handling. This thought leadership approach elevated our presence beyond standard exhibition marketing.

The cumulative effect of these innovations - cost reduction, adaptive materials, lean staffing and specialized content - created a uniquely efficient and effective trade show presence. The results - a soft dollar ROI of 880% and potential hard dollar ROI exceeding 4,300% - demonstrated that JAXPORT maximized our trade show impact with limited resources while generating substantial business opportunities.

VIDEO LINK

WATCH VIDEO



OTHER MATERIAL

MATERIALS IN FOLDER